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TO THE  
PURCHASERS  
OF THE  
NEW EDITION  
OF  
COKE UPON LITTLETON.

**M**R. HARGRAVE, the editor of so much of the New Edition of COKE UPON LITTLETON as has been published, at length finds his relinquishment of the undertaking in an unfinished state quite unavoidable. Numerous and severe are the sacrifices, which he has heretofore made in order to accomplish the original proposals in their fullest extent. To this moment he feels the effect of those sacrifices; nor is he likely ever to conquer wholly the disadvantage already incurred from them. But it might be improper and disgusting to enter into particulars upon this head, which in its nature is too personal to the editor to be interesting to others. He will therefore be content with generally declaring, that his situation is become such, as to render him unequal to any longer sustaining the weight of those labors, which he has ever found incident to the work upon the extended plan of annotation adopted by him from the commencement of the edition, though certainly not belonging to it from the very limited professions and terms originally held out to the Publick. It is from personal considerations, and in his own defence, that he thus adverts to having passed the bounds of the first undertaking in the actual execution: because, as he feels himself open to censure, from those indisposed to yield to indulgent construction, for having done *less* than he promised, he too plainly sees the necessity of striving to soften such censure by the recollection of his having also done *more*. In truth, had he not rashly exceeded the limits first prescribed, by wandering into the wide field of annotation, it is most probable, that the *whole* of the edition would have been finished long ago, and consequently that the editor would not now have to mortify himself by apologizing for executing only *one half* of it\*. This to be sure is the most favourable point of view for the editor; its tendency being to shew, that his excess of zeal to render the edition *valuable* has been one cause of his finally leaving it *imperfect*. If it shall be thought proper by others kindly to receive the editor's apology in this form,

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\* The COKE upon LITTLETON, exclusive of the preface and index, consists of 393 folios or 786 pages. Mr. HARGRAVE has proceeded in the new edition and actually published to the end of folio 190 or page 380, which is exactly 13 folios short of one half of the work.

it will qualify his unhappiness at the painful and trying moment of separation from a very favorite work before its advancement into maturity. Should a less indulgent construction be applied to the editor, it will deeply wound feelings already enough exercised; but from a consciousness of being open to some degree of exception for what rigid observers may stile the abandonment of a work long promised to be completed, he must in that case kiss the rod, and submit himself to the severity of animadversion with a patient humility.

It is no small consolation to Mr. Hargrave to accompany this recital of his own failure in the edition, with information of its having fallen into the hands of a professional gentleman \* of such a description, as to warrant expecting from him a quick and able execution of the remainder of the undertaking. As Mr. Hargrave understands, his successor is prompted to engage in the work by an extreme partiality for it, and from having been in the habit of studying and annotating on the COKE UPON LITTLETON. He also possesses the important advantage of having long practised in the conveyancing line; to which, as Mr. Hargrave can speak from his own experience as a barrister in that branch of the law, a familiarity with the law of real property, and consequently with the writings of LITTLETON and COKE, is peculiarly essential. These and other considerations claim from Mr. Hargrave much beyond a hope, that the depending edition of COKE UPON LITTLETON will gain considerably by change of the editor; and that the new adventurer in this arduous undertaking will stamp the remainder of the edition with much greater value, than could be reached by any efforts however vigorous from the original editor.

FRA. HARGRAVE.

*Boswell Court, 18 Jan. 1785.*

\* CHARLES BUTLER, of Lincoln's Inn, Esquire.

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A D D R E S S

FROM

Mr. H A R G R A V E,

TO THE

PURCHASERS of the NEW EDITION  
of COKE UPON LITTLETON,

Announcing his Relinquishment of the Under-  
taking, and Mr. B U T L E R's succeeding  
to it.